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Subject: My essay

Closed Captioned Television

AJ Aloogie

For thirteen years, I never saw nor heard of closed captioned television. I watched television with my daddy interpreting for me sometimes. I disliked depending on my daddy or anyone interpreting television for me because I missed some scenes on television by paying attention to the interpreter. On my thirteenth birthday, my beloved grandmother gave me a closed captioned decoder for television. It gave me thrills and joy that I could watch closed captioning with television, and it didn't "leave" me out. I watch television everyday with closed captioning, and I learn so much about many things on television, especially how to read and write in English from closed captioning. Sometimes I want to watch a television show, and it is not closed captioned; I get angry and wonder why I cannot "hear" television. I read the words through closed captioning on television instead of hearing the volume on television since I am deaf. Closed captioning helps me understand television shows, movies, and commercials. I feel equal to hearing people when we all are able to watch television, but not all television programs are captioned. I love to watch television since closed caption started. I feel all television programs, news, movies, and commercials should be closed captioned twenty-four hours a day.

Suppose the volume on all televisions were turned on mute, how would hearing people watch television? Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and some elderly people cannot hear radios and televisions like people with good hearing. If people who hear grow to be elderly and lose their hearing, they will learn and understand more about not being able to hear. If you had to choose between your sight or hearing, which would you surrender your sense of sight or hearing? Hearing people who have no knowledge of deaf cultures probably would choose to lose their sight. I feel it is a lot easier being deaf because it is easy to access information and entertainment on television by reading closed captions. Unfortunately, not all television programs, news, movies, and commercials are closed captioned because it depends on the people who sponsor the programs, news, movies, and commercials if they will or will not pay for the closed captioning. Eventually, if there was no closed captioning for television, deaf and hard-of-hearing people would not own televisions nor watch television very often. Therefore, I feel everything shown on television should be captioned because it gives deaf people equal access to television. This should be a right for all. Information and entertainment should not be denied to all

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people.

On the national news, you see that a serious weather condition is headed your way. You need more information and need to watch the news, but it is often not closed captioned. Perhaps the weather condition worsens and you have no idea what to do, and you can get seriously injured from the weather. "Although there are some laws requiring television stations to transmit emergency information with captions or in other visual way, these laws are not strong enough" (Strauss 1). It is not right for deaf, hard-of-hearing and elderly people to get stuck in dangerous situations while the hearing people can have the opportunity to escape the dangerous situation. For instance, "by 1981 almost two hundred public television stations across the country carried the program, and the Nielsen survey estimated an audience of three million. I have been with deaf people who stopped whatever they were doing to watch it. The yearning for news has been particularly strong among the deaf. Cut off from radio and television news coverage, they always had to wait for tomorrow's newspapers to find out what exactly happened- the status of deaf printers was enhanced by their speedy access to the news (Neisser 236)." So, I feel all television should be closed captioned twenty-four hours a day. Current access to news at same time for deaf and hearing people to be aware of what is going on in the national makes everybody feel informed. Also, hearing impaired people can access information on products shown during commercials to buy products. Television with closed captioning is important knowledge that should be available to the hearing impaired.

All programs on television should be entitled to closed captioning all the time for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and elderly people. Just as all television programs are entitled to have volumes for hearing people. Closed captioning is similar to having interpreters interpret the volume on television. Closed captioning is kind of a decoder for television which allows television to be read instead of just hearing through the volume. "Captions now have the potential to reach millions of deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers as well as the hearing audience, people who are learning to read, and people learning English as a second language. The educational benefits of television will be enhanced as families begin to "read" television together. Captions will also be beneficial in public places such as airports or bars, where television audio is difficult to hear ("More" 1)." However, many deaf people are not able to enjoy programs, news, movies, and commercials because there are no closed captions for them. I am certain lots of money was saved to run programs, news, movies, and commercials without closed-caption. "Would the cost of adding captioning be asking too much? To the millions of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, it has nothing to do with money. It has everything to do with dignity and respect" ("Closed" 1). So, I feel captioned television for education can be accessed

easily for

many people using closed captions and immigrant people can easily access closed captions for their second language.

The United States Congress decided that deaf and hearing-impaired people should have equal access to television. Closed-captioned television has made it

possible for thousands of people to gain access to television which improves the

quality of their lives. But not all the time. Inevitably, I know someone out there will

argue with me about funding Closed Captioning programs. Someone would say the money and the people will say who will take the responsibility for Close Caption

Decoding television news, commercials, movies, and programs. I wonder can someone create technology for Closed Captioning Television to make it run twenty-four hours a day. Closed-captioned television will provide access to information and entertainment to thousands of people nation wide. It also will provide benefits to elderly people who have some loss of hearing. It as well can assist children with reading and other learning skills, and improve literacy skills. It even can assist immigrant people who are learning English as a second language with language comprehension. Evidently, "Closed captions are very helpful and useful for millions of people to be able to watch and understand the television. Deaf and heard-of-hearing people, people with an auditory processing learning disability, people with head injuries resulting in auditory processing difficulties, and people with attention deficits benefits from closed caption (Matthews 1)."

In conclusion, one way to keep closed captioning funded by Congress is by thanking them for funding closed captioning. You should also thank the networks

and advertisers for funding closed captioning. You can write or e-mail your state

Senators. For example, tell Congress how important captioning is to you! Help protect United States Department of Education funding levels for captioning! What

you can do: write (send via fax, e-mail, and pony express) to Congressional. Keep

your message short and to the point--and send it as soon as possible! It is important for people to show their support of closed captioning for all programs, news, movies, and commercials by writing to advertisers, and producers of all programs. Also it is necessary to encourage officials to add more funds to the project for television captions for the hearing impaired.

"To find out which agency captioned the program, look for the caption credits at the end of the show" ("Solving" 4).

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